

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 299664 TOSEC 320136

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 9823 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 09 DEC

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S E C R E T GENEVA 9823

NODIS

FOR AMB SCHAUFELE FROM WISNER

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: MEETINGS WITH MUGABE AND SITHOLE

1. I CALLED ON MUGABE AND SITHOLE ON DECEMBER 9.

2. MUGABE TOLD ME THAT HE FULLY AGREED WITH AN
ADJOURNMENT OF THE CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK AND BELIEVED
THE CONFERENCE SHOULD STAND RECESSED FOR NOT MORE THAN
FOUR WEEKS. IF THE RECESS LASTED LONGER THAN THAT,
"PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHERE GENEVA IS." HE EXPECTED
THAT THE BRITISH AND WE WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE
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PAGE 02 STATE 299664 TOSEC 320136

BREAK TO SORT OUT POINTS OF VIEW AND BRING SMITH AROUND

TO A PACKAGE WHICH COINCIDES CLOSELY WITH THAT WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS PRESENTED. WITH RESPECT TO BRITISH INVOLVEMENT, MUGABE SAID THE FRONT WOULD STUDY CAREFULLY AND SUGGESTIONS THE BRITISH HAD TO MAKE BUT THEY DID NOT WANT "THE DOG TO HAVE TOO MANY TEETH." IT WAS NOT THE FRONT'S DESIRE TO SHED WHITE SETTLER RULE FOR BRITISH IMPERIAL DOMINATION. HE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT HE AND HIS DELEGATION WOULD NOT PREJUDGE THE CASE. MEANWHILE, HE ASKED THAT WE KEEP THE PRESSURE UP ON SMITH.

3. MUDZI, WHO WAS PRESENT AT OUR MEETING, PREDICTABLY RAISED THE QUESTION OF SMITH'S "CONTRACT." HE AND MUGABE SAID THAT THE BRITISH WERE GIVING THEM THE IMPRESSION THAT THE CONTRACT EXISTED BETWEEN US AND SMITH AND THAT THE BRITISH WERE NOT INVOLVED. I CORRECTED THE TWO ZANU MILITANTS AND REMINDED THEM THAT SMITH, LIKE THEY, WAS A TOUGH NEGOTIATOR. I REVIEWED WITH THEM OUR COMMITMENT TO MAJORITY RULE AND THE PROCESS, INCLUDING WHITE PARTICIPATION, WHICH HAD BEEN DEVELOPED BEFORE THE CONFERENCE OPENED. THEY SEEMED INTERESTED AND RUSHED TO SAY THAT THEIR PROPOSALS FORESAW EUROPEAN POWER SHARING DURING AND AFTER THE INTERIM. I REMINDED THEM THAT THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION WOULD NOT PERMIT THEM TO COUNT ON A NEW FRAMEWORK BEING SOLD AS EASILY AS THEY IMPLIED.

4. SITHOLE WAS HIS USUAL, JOVIAL AND ARTICULATE SELF. HE DESCRIBED HIS TRIP TO AFRICA AND SAID THAT IT BEGAN WITH A CALL ON THE TANZANIAN PRIME MINISTER, WHO CRITICIZED THE NATIONALISTS FOR WASTING SO MUCH TIME OVER THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE. THE TANZANIAN SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT SAW A ROLE FOR THE BRITISH IN SORTING OUT THE DEADLOCK OVER THE CONTROL OF SECURITY FORCES. SITHOLE SAID HE REPLIED SAYING THAT A SETTLEMENT HAD TO TAKE BLACK AND WHITE FEARS INTO ACCOUNT AND THAT CONTROL OVER THE SECURITY FORCES OUGHT TO BE SHARED WITH WHITE RHODESIANS. WITH KAUNDA, SITHOLE HAD ARGUED FOR HIS "NATIONAL" GOVERNMENT REPRESENTING ALL OF ZIMBABWE'S LEADERS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 299664 TOSEC 320136

AND NOT A SINGLE PARTY GOVERNMENT. IN MOZAMBIQUE, SITHOLE MET THE DEFENSE MINISTER WHO TOLD HIM THE DATE OF INDEPENDENCE WAS THE SINGLE IMPORTANT ISSUE. SITHOLE ARGUED AGAINST THE MINISTER, POINTING OUT THAT THE DATE WAS LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE REALITY OF THE TRANSFER OF POWER. IN LUANDA, SITHOLE MET WITH PRIME MINISTER AND NETO. HE WAS STRUCK BY THE GLOOM OF THE CITY AND THE EXTENSIVE WAR DAMAGE AND

SAID THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME HE UNDERSTOOD THE TRAGEDY OF THE ANGOLAN SITUATION. ANGOLANS WERE INTIMIDATED BY CUBANS WHO STRUT AROUND THE CAPITAL AS IF THEY OWNED IT. THE MARKETS WERE NEAR EMPTY AND HE WAS TOLD THAT UNITS'S MILITARY ACTIVITY WAS DEPRIVING LUANDA OF ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES. THE ANGOLAN LEADERS TOLD SITHOLE HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS TO CONTROL THE SECURITY FORCES AND SITHOLE REPLIED MAKING POINTS SIMILAR TO THAT HE MADE TO THE TANZANIAN PRIME MINISTER. IN LAGOS, HE MET AFRICAN AFFAIRS EXPERTS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND THEY TOLD HIM THEY RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR POWER SHARING WITH THE WHITES DURING THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION. HE SAW MOBUTU IN KINSHASA, WHO URGED SITHOLE TO MAKE SURE A SETTLEMENT CAME OUT OF GENEVA. SUMMING UP HIS TRAVELS, SITHOLE POINTED OUT THAT EVERYONE HE MET WANTED GENEVA TO SUCCEED.

5. HAVING COMPLETED HIS UPBEAT REPORT, SITHOLE ASKED THAT I COMMUNICATE HIS PROFOUND GRATITUDE FOR THE FACT THE US HAD PRODUCED THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. HE BELIEVED THAT THE CURRENT IMPASSE COULD BE OVERCOME IF THE BRITISH ACCEPT THEIR RESPONSIBILITY BUT, UNLIKE MUGAGE, HE SUGGESTED THAT "THE LION HAVE TEETH." THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL NEED AN EXTERNAL PROTECTOR. SHE WILL BE LIKE "A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WALKING ALONE AT NIGHT. IF SHE DOES NOT HAVE TWO OR THREE MEN TO GUARD HER, SHE WILL BE SUBJECT TO ATTACK."

6. WITH RESPECT TO ADJOURNMENT, HE TOOK ISSUE WITH MUGABE'S BELIEF THAT THE CONFERENCE SHOULD RECONVENE ELSEWHERE THAN GENEVA AND ARGUED ANY AFRICAN SITE WOULD PRODUCE CONTROVERSY. THE ONLY SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 299664 TOSEC 320136

PROBLEM WITH GENEVA, HE SAID, WAS THE COST AND HE FELT CERTAIN THAT ALL DELEGATIONS WOULD BE PREPARED TO RETURN HERE AFTER THE CHRISTMAS RECESS, WHICH HE ARGUED SHOULD NOT LAST LONGER THAN 3 OR 4 WEEKS.

7. IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE THE DELEGATIONS RETURN, SITHOLE RECOMMENDED THAT SHORTLY BEFORE ADJOURNMENT, THE BRITISH SUMMARIZE THE DISCUSSIONS OVER AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND PROPOSE A ROLE FOR THEMSELVES. A BRITISH PACKAGE, EVEN IN OUTLINE FORM, WOULD GIVE THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT DURING THE CHRISTMAS RECESS AND GIVE THEM REASON TO RECONVENE. CATTO UNQTE ROBINSON

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